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UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS: REPORT FOR 1993-1994

AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND BUDGET FOR 1995

PART I. AFRICA

Section 16 - Senegal

(submitted by the High Commissioner)

GE.95-02330 (E)

I.16. SENEGAL

1. Characteristics of the beneficiary refugee population

1. As at 31 December 1994, the refugee population in Senegal was estimated at 73,000 persons, including some 60,000 UNHCR-assisted Mauritanians settled at more than 200 sites near Senegalese villages over an expanse of almost 700 kilometres along the Senegal River. The Mauritanian refugees are of rural origin and their arrival in Senegal dates back to mid-1989; they are divided into two main groups, the Peuhls and the Toucouleurs, and consist mainly of herdsmen and farmers. An estimated 10,000 Mauritanian refugees are unassisted.

2. According to estimates from before 1994, women constitute about 25 per cent of the total Mauritanian refugee population, men only 20 per cent, and children under 18 years of age 55 per cent.

3. Senegal has also taken in urban refugees of various nationalities, including refugees originating in the following countries: Zaire, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Somalia, Togo, Mali, Liberia, Rwanda, Burundi, Sierra Leone, etc.

2. Major developments in 1994 and 1995

4. In search of durable solutions to the problem of Mauritanian refugees, UNHCR has held consultations with Senegal concerning ways of repatriating the Mauritanian refugees. While it is still far too early for an assessment of these discussions, it can already be said that a consensus exists on both sides regarding the need to facilitate the refugees' return.

5. Also in 1995, the recommendations of the joint WFP/UNHCR mission regarding the withdrawal of food aid from Mauritanian refugees in Senegal were implemented. The gradual reduction in WFP food aid began in January 1995 and the process will be completed by 31 December 1995, with all the ensuing consequences.

6. In anticipation of the cessation of WFP assistance set for 31 December 1995, an information and awareness campaign for refugees on the details of this measure has been mounted jointly by the Senegalese authorities and UNHCR, but it is still much too soon to gauge its real impact.

7. The allocation for programmes of assistance to Senegal in 1995 has been raised in order to cope with the higher project costs resulting from the devaluation of the CFA franc. Thus, there have been increases for the urban refugee assistance project in the sectors of domestic requirements/household support, community services, income generation and support to the executing agency. Funding for the project of assistance to Mauritanian refugees has been increased following a rise in the number of beneficiaries, which has necessitated an expansion of activities, mainly in the transport/logistics, water and education sectors, as well as the introduction of the health and legal aid/protection sectors. An allocation for secondary and post-secondary education has been added.

3. 1996 country programmes

(a) Objectives

8. In 1996, UNHCR will continue to strive towards the full attainment of the objectives defined in 1993. Basically, these are:

Encouragement of the voluntary repatriation of Mauritanian refugees;

Development of activities likely to encourage self-sufficiency among refugees who have not opted for voluntary repatriation;

Pursuit of the ongoing efforts on behalf of urban refugees.

(i) Mauritanian refugees

9. The renewed endeavours to encourage the voluntary repatriation of Mauritanian refugees can only proceed through consultations with the Senegalese and Mauritanian authorities, and also with the refugees themselves. In this area, it is planned to continue in 1996 the consultations undertaken at various levels in 1995.

10. UNHCR's second priority in Senegal will be to strengthen production activities and integrate them in existing development projects financed in the Senegal River region by donors favourable to this approach. Already, specialized bodies, particularly those of the European Union which has been approached on this subject, have decided to provide assistance for development operations in the agricultural areas of the Podor region.

11. As part of its efforts to promote the food self-sufficiency programme, UNHCR will continue and expand activities under the ongoing multi-purpose rural development project in the Department of Podor thanks to financing from the German Cooperation organization. Thus, the project for the development of 400 hectares of land for rice-growing which was launched in 1995 will continue for the next four years and will eventually enable 4,000 refugees to become self-sufficient.

12. The ongoing vocational training programmes will be continued.

(ii) Urban refugees

13. The urban refugees living in Dakar, most of whom are young single people, are experiencing unemployment problems and are therefore unable to provide for themselves on a durable basis. Despite the material assistance afforded to them by the "care and maintenance" project, their living conditions remain precarious. Accordingly, the Regional Office for Western Africa in Dakar will, in 1996, carry out various activities (vocational training, repatriation, resettlement) for urban refugees meeting the criteria of eligibility for these programmes. The Regional Office also plans to commission a study with a view to devising an approach to the socio-economic problems of urban refugees.

(b) Proposed budgets for 1996

14. The discontinuance of food aid at the end of 1995 will doubtless have repercussions for financial resources unless, in the meantime, the authorities of all the parties concerned arrange for the implementation of a repatriation programme. The 1996 budgetary allocation for the implementation of the local settlement project for Mauritanian refugees will, in particular, enable the refugees' needs in the following seven areas of assistance to be met: transport, drinking water supply, health care, community social services, education, agriculture, and legal aid. The priorities of the programme, in order of importance, will be: primary education (approximately 29.9 per cent of resources), agriculture (26.5 per cent) and transport (22.6 per cent).

(c) Implementing partners

15. The Commissariat à l'assistance pour les rapatriés et personnes déplacées (CARPD), the official body of the Senegalese Government responsible for the coordination of UNHCR activities in Senegal on behalf of refugees, will act as intermediary between UNHCR and the country's government departments. On the other hand, the task of implementing the project for the local settlement of Mauritanian refugees, which it has been performing for almost six years already, will lie with the African Office for Development and Cooperation (OFADEC).

16. Lastly, more recently, a French NGO called "Diapante" has been associated as an operational partner in the implementation of the irrigated land project for Mauritanian refugees at Matam. It will have particular responsibility for training instructors and target groups. In 1996, according to the UNHCR Regional Office for Western Africa, all the partners will be associated in project implementation with the exception of ENDA, an NGO which has been an operational partner of UNHCR only since 1994.

(d) Programme delivery and administrative support costs

17. Variations due to changes in budget parameters are not discussed in the subsequent analysis (Overview of UNHCR Activities - Part I refers).

(i) 1994 expenditure (all sources of funds)

18. The 1994 expenditure of the UNHCR Regional Office in Dakar, which also covers Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and the Niger, was lower than estimated due to delays in filling posts as well as a favourable exchange rate. Savings were therefore realized in staff costs as well as utilities and communications.

(ii) Revised 1995 requirements (all sources of funds)

19. The revised 1995 requirements are higher than the initial estimates, mainly due to the creation of two posts for the Lokossa field office. Provision has also been made for the purchase of two vehicles and computer equipment and for security measures at staff members' residences.

(iii) Initial 1996 requirements (all sources of funds)

20. The 1996 requirements are slightly lower than the 1995 revised estimates, as it is expected that most necessary equipment replacement will have taken place in 1995.

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN SENEGAL

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1994	1995		1996	
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1994 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
GENERAL PROGRAMMES (1)				
196.5	165.1	239.1	CARE AND MAINTENANCE	220.2
806.2	548.4	847.7	LOCAL SETTLEMENT	750.1
2.5 a/	-	-	RESETTLEMENT	-
1 568.7	1 470.4	1 717.9	PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Overview Tables (Part II)	1 623.8
2 573.9	2 183.9	2 804.7	SUB-TOTAL OPERATIONS	2 594.1
352.3	378.5	433.7	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Overview Tables (Part II)	402.1
2 926.2	2 562.4	3 238.4	TOTAL (1)	2 996.2
SPECIAL PROGRAMMES (2)				
87.0	133.4	-	EDUCATION ACCOUNT	-
96.6	-	-	OTHER TRUST FUNDS Various assistance	-
37.8	21.8	55.0	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT Junior Professional Officer See Overview Tables (Part II)	55.0
221.4	155.2	55.0	TOTAL (2)	55.0
3 147.6	2 717.6	3 293.4	GRAND TOTAL (1 + 2)	3 051.2

a/ Obligation incurred against other programmes.